3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

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Frontispiece

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

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Mother's Song

Kichik kina, qara kuz — Little tiny dark-eyed one
Wai balam! — Alas, my child!
Tili tatliq, shirin suz — Sweet of tongue, O silvery voice
Wai balam! — Alas, my child!
Balam mandin airilde — My child is taken from me
Wai balam! — Alas, my child!
Uida yalghuz qalarman, — In the house I am left alone,
Wai balam, balam! — Alas, my child! my child!

Daughter's Song

Man anamdin airilip — Torn from my mother's side
Sunde qanatim qaralip; — My wings are broken and bent;
Man yiglamae, kim yiglasun — Who may weep, if not I
Janim anamdin airilip? — Torn from my darling mother's side?

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Some days after the actual wedding two parties are given by the bride's family, if well-off, one for the men and the other for the ladies. The following is an account by D. of a wedding party she attended in the women's apartments of a wealthy household at Kashgar. It was by no means the first social function at which she assisted, for she frequently entertained and was entertained by the Kashgari wives of friends or dependants of the Consulate-General. Thanks to the colloquial knowledge of the language which she acquired, she thus became familiar with the feminine side of Turki social life, a subject on which I have found no first-hand information in any of the books I have read about Chinese Turkistan.

"I rode to Y—— K——'s town house on Camel Sulaiman, followed in a Chinese cart by Aisha Khan resplendent in a new dress, a purple velvet jacket embroidered with silver and a black and gold cap. When we arrived a servant conducted us through a narrow passage to the door of the inner court-yard of the house, where the bridegroom's mother and some of her friends and relations came out to receive us. The party had started at about half-past nine in the morning, and as it was now eleven most of the guests had already arrived and the women musicians were seated in a corner waiting to strike up. The room was large and whitewashed, and the guests in their gorgeous dresses sitting all round against the walls on quilts and gaily-coloured rugs made a wonderful blaze of colour.

"Some sat cross-legged but most in the usual Turki position, i.e. sitting on their heels with their knees on the ground. Most of the women were wearing their wedding clothes and ornaments, consisting of velvet gold-embroidered caps of different colours, satin coats trimmed with Indian cloth of gold, bright-hued silk skirts and highly polished black boots like riding-boots. In front of their caps they wore a big

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3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

spray of beaten-gold flowers quivering on gold wire stalks, bunches of similar ornaments above each ear and huge gold filigree earrings. Their hair was in plaits, with a long black silk tassel attached to each plait. The dresses were of red, blue, emerald, plum, purple, pink and many other bright tints, and the sunlight streaming through the one window lit up a most wonderful picture.

"Two chairs had been placed side by side at one end of the room, one for me and one for the bride when she should come. One of the guests who came soon after me was another little bride, some relation of the family but not the girl for whose wedding the party was given. I was told that it was only her second appearance in public since her wedding, and it was perhaps for this reason that her reception was particularly pretty. All the ladies stood up, and as she was led from one to the other each gave her a kiss and shook hands Turki fashion, i.e. taking her clasped hands in theirs and then touching their own lips with a graceful gesture. She was only fifteen, I think, and terribly shy to begin with. She was led up to me and placed in the chair next mine for a few minutes, but she soon slid on to the floor and sat beside her younger sister, a talkative child of eleven who had been told off to fan me. A few belated guests were ushered in, and having shaken hands all round, were assisted to take off their outdoor caps and veils and immediately presented by our hostess with brand-new indoor caps, which unlike the outdoor ones have no fur or lining. Some of the women had brought their own and politely refused the offer of a new one; but it must add considerably to the expense of giving a party when you have to provide indoor caps to guests who have forgotten theirs! Tea was served, soon after I arrived in small china cups with sugar and no milk. Our hostess and her relations had none themselves, but spent their time handing round cups, filling them up with tea and spooning in sugar. There was one lady whom I could not take my eyes off, she was such a wonderful figure in her crimson satin dress with eight long plaits of hair hanging down from under her richly-embroidered cap, and fastened on to four of these long black silk tassels which swept the ground as she moved about. After the cups had been cleared away the musicians struck up and some of the ladies rose and danced in the usual way, one at a time; but soon the long narrow *dastarkhwans* or cloths spread on the ground for eating were put out once more and huge trays of peaches and nectarines were brought in. These disappeared in a marvellously short time and were followed by some more music and dancing, and at about half-past twelve the wedding feast began in earnest. The first course was a very popular one called the Wedding Dish, a sort of soufflé made of stiffly-beaten white of egg and powdered sugar, which is always eaten at weddings. It was served in small bowls with pieces of bread. The arrival of this dish was a signal for a temporary relaxation of the intense decorum which had hitherto characterized the proceedings. The children who had come with their mammas, and who had up to now been playing in the court-yard, crowded into the room or leant in through the wide windows, clamouring for some of the Wedding Dish. The heat became terrific. The hostess had disappeared, presumably to superintend the preparation of the special dishes which were to be served later on. The lady of the eight pigtails and other friends of the family, having

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/Chinese Moslems (Dungans)/

within the railings in the mosque and read the Koran, wear white or green turbans, the leader's turban being more elaborate, with a tassel hanging down the back. Common people wear pointed octagonal caps of white, red or black, the color distinguishing the sect to which they belong.

Some women dress differently from the Chinese women, and wear a sort of turban hat. Ordinarily their dresses are in dark colors, but they may wear gay colors for festivals. According to ancient custom they must veil their faces in the presence of men, but this custom was abandoned long ago.

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In cities and towns where the Chinese Moslems dress exactly like the Han Chinese, the men can be distinguished by their physical build and features, but the women are not easily recognized.

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d. Occupation

Most Chinese Moslems are business men and traders, and most of them also farm. As farmers they are not equal to the Han Chinese, but they excel in dealing with cattle and everywhere they monopolize the beef and sheep trade. They are also merchants, bakers, workers in jade, money changers, and inn and restaurant keepers.

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Outside a Moslem-owned restaurant there hangs a sign displaying a water pot surmounted by a dress hat, and two Chinese characters, Hui-hui. The pot signifies ceremonial cleanliness and guarantees that no pork is used. The hat indicates respect to customers. There are also two Chinese characters on the tea pot, meaning "Pure and True."

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Formerly their religion forebade the Moslems to become money-lenders, barbers, fortune-tellers, actors, or servants or apprentices to the Chinese. How strictly the people now observe this taboo is not known.

3. Social values

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a. Group spirit

The we-feeling is very strong among the Dungans. The whole group will sacrifice time and money for an individual oppressed by outsiders, and fight for him until justice prevails. Endowed with a courageous nature, the Moslem man is willing to sacrifice his life for the welfare of the group.

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This spirit is shown by overt expression in daily social relationships. The Chinese title Lao-piao (old cousin) is applied even to a stranger of the same religious faith. The word old signifies respect; cousin signifies blood relationship. Hence Lao-piao indicates a feeling of closeness toward all members of the faith. Another expression of this feeling is found in the saying that "every Moslem in the world belongs to the same family."

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b. Concept of charity

Many of the values in Chinese Moslem society are based upon